

**District IV Citizen Review Panel**  
**707 N. Armstrong Pl, Boise, ID 83704**  
**Tuesday, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**4:00 pm – 6:00 pm**

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82182967728?pwd=OE0rWjZsbzc4djNUbEVZSWtpeEplUT09>

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**Panel Members:** Brian McCauley, Nicole Noltensmeyer, Melissa Mezo, Shannon McCarthy until 5:00pm.

**Absent:** Kym Nilsen, Darcie Bobrowski. The panel has one membership vacancy.

**Staff:**

Misty Myatt (Idaho Department of Health and Welfare), Laura Smith and Courtney Boyce (Central District Health)

The meeting started at 4:03pm. This was an informal discussion regarding agenda items. The panel does not have quorum, and is unable to vote to consent to the agenda, confirm meeting minutes, or other agenda initiatives. The meeting minutes from June 2020 and July 2020, will need to be approved at the August meeting. This meeting is in accordance with Open Meeting Law.

**Foster Youth in Group Home Experiences**

This agenda item was tabled as no representatives from Idaho Foster Youth Advisory Board were present in the meeting. The CRP welcomes any current or former foster youth that has experience in group homes and/or residential treatment facilities in Idaho, contact Courtney Boyce at [cboyce@cdh.idaho.gov](mailto:cboyce@cdh.idaho.gov).

**Idaho Statewide CRP Leadership Conference Call Update**

Brian invited Courtney and Nicole to discuss the last call. Courtney reviewed the last conference call, and discussed that most of the meeting was talking about the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's response to the district CRP reports from across the state. Those participating in the call discussed the value of providing a response back to the IDHW response, to identify gaps, continued concerns, or request clarification on steps to address state/regional recommendations. Courtney discussed that there is time to prepare this report as it is not mandated in policy to respond by a certain time. Courtney discussed that Geri, the district director of Eastern Idaho Public Health is also the CRP liaison and CRP member. Geri has

facilitated the Idaho Statewide CRP Leadership Conference Calls, in terms of sending out the agenda, meeting minutes, action items, meeting invites, and facilitating the meeting. Her responsibilities have been diverted to maintain and respond to COVID-19. Courtney discussed that she volunteered to help coordinate the next call.

Brian talked about formalizing the statewide structure for leadership call for conference, such as moving it to a different district, so doesn't become saturated for one district. Brian discussed the benefits of different regions are collaborating, assigns date of hosting and managing logistics. This was discussed as a panel, for the proposed new format. This would include working with the District CRPs, through the coordinators and chairs, to assist with the agenda setting, availability of CRP members, and remaining responsibilities. The Chair should be the point person for the project, while working with their available resources including PHD liaison to assist with facilitating the next meeting. Laura shared that the facilitation of different work groups on different levels of public health is common, either on a quarterly or yearly rotation. Asking this of the panels is a reasonable ask. This was shared after confirming who should be facilitating the meetings. Nicole and Shannon agreed with process. Melissa asked questions regarding the process for getting by-in. Brian agreed and discussed the current precedent. Brian shared that it may bolster the effectiveness of the statewide CRP leadership conference calls, by coordinating with different districts. By getting ahead to re-structure these calls, works to distribute the burden throughout the districts for a more equitable approach. Nicole discussed that she attended the meeting, addressed that there are some regions that are struggling more than others, and it would likely be best if a rotation is offered. For this next meeting - Region IV is facilitating this leadership call. It was encouraged to make the last item in the meeting being to pass the baton for the next meeting. This Idaho CRP Leadership Meeting will occur sometime in September. It was asked for Courtney to make a template for statewide calls in preparation for the next meeting. Meeting minutes, follow up from previous meeting, pass the baton items, next meeting will be etc.

#### **District IV CRP Response to IDHW Report**

From the Idaho Statewide CRP Leadership Conference Call, it was decided that each CRP would create a regional response to the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare report titled "Idaho Citizen Review Panel: Recommendations and Responses July 2018 - October 2019." Courtney shared some of her observations with the panel, on Page 1 under Introduction, the department discussed submitting their report at the beginning of each legislative session that would include recommendations from the previous federal fiscal year. The panel agreed, however they would like a definitive date from the Department in order to prepare. The 'beginning' could be loosely interpreted otherwise.

This allows the regional CRPs to coordinate statewide to create a response report by the end of the legislative session, if they chose to respond. The report also identified that they conducted extensive data analysis in early 2018. This analysis contributed to the identification of several themes around safety practices. The method of this analysis included data collection, including from community partners. It was discussed that in the future, the District IV Citizen Review Panel would like to be considered a community partner and stakeholder, in order to contribute their expertise and experience to data collection. This was discussed that it requested that electronic copies of all investigative reports, including raw data pertaining to case reviews, internal analysis of policies and procedures, etc. be submitted to the Chair and Public Health District liaison of each Citizen Review Panel. This can help the Panel refine their recommendations by having recent, accurate data from the Department.

This started a discussion regarding the process for reporting. Each quarter as defined by the fiscal year calendar from the public health department, the District IV Citizen Review Panel is responsible for submitting a report that includes the number of case reviews, in-kind hours, and synopsis of activities from the CRP. Most importantly, this report provides recommendations to the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and the Child Protection Legislative Oversight Committee for the improvement of the child welfare systems. These recommendations should be measurable, specific, concrete, and not generalized. The Panel reviewed how it is important to provide clear and concise recommendations with the expectation to have proposed solutions and strategies. CRPs have a responsibility to provide specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and timely goals. While providing recommendations, they should also gauge the capacity of the Department and Oversight Committee to implement. This was discussed in the linear format of identifying the problem, data that we have to support that, recommendations for change, and other specific criteria for that change.

The Panel discussed a miswording in the report that should have said 'minimum' instead of 'maximum.' This altered the timelines of safety assessments for at-risk children. Misty discussed that the case safety team has been in place since last April, and has significantly reduced time to get safety assessment closed. Misty described that there are five people throughout state that are responsible for the documentation to close an assessment. In terms of improving child welfare, Misty said that she didn't have any data in terms of child welfare outcomes. We don't have enough data to definitively determine how effective, but informally she would say she feels that this process has been an improvement as it allows staff to focus on families with referrals that require more assistance. Misty was also asked to describe how case worker capacity is analyzed. Misty discussed that the average case load is 12 – 14 cases, but that the level of demand is different as it may differ based on the volume of individuals involved in the case. Misty shared that at the department when they were implementing CANS, they were hoping to level case-load by capacity, not by the case number as it pertains to balancing workloads relating to the high number of interventions. When addressing how caseloads right now managed right now, Misty shared that case management supervisors address cases, look at current case assignments, work load, capacity, and discussing if needed transferring cases. There is an opportunity for improvement, however the department identifies thoughtful-assigning cases to case manager. Brian asked if caseloads ever change the outcome to safety assessments? The structure of the team was to have workers assist with minimizing caseloads, so that it would be centralized based on circumstances of case and not workload capacity.

### **District IV CRP Quarterly Report Recommendations**

The CRP discussed the benefit of having raw data submitted to the CRP, in addition to published reports within 30 days of publication. The data categories are unknown, but could include the number of completed case plan, permanency decision marks, the number of schools, case workers, placements, emergency removals etc. The panel also discussed Pride training tools and curriculum for foster care families, and group home policies. The panel has previously discussed the benefit of information on the policies for placing children in group homes, what determines group home, general foster home, how long they stay there or which home they stay in. The continuing discussion included licensing requirements to become a group home and the kind of training/minimal level of education including continuing education, that is a requirement for employees and administrators. The panel discussed identifying the safety and effectiveness of group homes. This could include trauma-informed care, continuing education credits, etc. The panel also discussed case-load capacity and training for caseworkers. The panel discussed if it was possible to quantify caseload capacity.

To do so would relatively estimate work-load and include scoring each case in order to distribute caseloads to workers, while taking into consideration strengths and experience. Misty shared that there can be upwards of 23 children in caseloads, given that there may be multiple children or sibling in each case. While this is not preferential, it can occur. Misty shared that there is value in addressing workload capacity. Melissa shared that this process was replicated in another state by a point-system. The panel determined that they would like the quantitative reports for Region IV, that replicate the reports being distributed in Report I.

As recommendations are not available for public review,  
the meeting minutes will not reflect the completed recommendations based on the diverse  
content of the discussions.

### *CRP Membership Vacancy*

Brian discussed with the panel the need to define what characteristics the panel is looking for in a new panel member, and when reviewing applications evaluate if we have candidates representing those characteristics, traits, and experience. Shannon shared prior to her departure, that she would look for someone with lived experience, perhaps with IFYAB. Discussions continued that would include GALs, advocacy work with children, former foster youth, current foster parents, and law enforcement. Brian discussed that he is mainly interested in a candidate that has a passion for child welfare and wanting to make improvements to the system. Melissa emphasized that this candidate should have a long vision and willing to dedicate themselves to the process of change. Nicole and Melissa agreed that the process of addressing vacancies or new candidates would mean opening up the application process each time, with previous applicants needing to reapply. This process can demonstrate their level of commitment. It was discussed as well that the application information should be shared through the CRP's networks to IFYAB and Family Advocates, as well as CDH's Facebook page. Brian emphasized that casting the net more broadly would bring in more applicants, but provide opportunity for the perfect candidate. Due to the limitations of time, additional agenda items were pushed to the next meeting. The next meeting agenda *may* include discussions on group home information, well-defined future recommendations to the department, moving forward: goals and objectives, and case review updates. The next meeting will be held August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 over Zoom, from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. The meeting notice including meeting information has already been posted to the CDH website.

Additional agenda items tabled due to time.

*Meeting minutes prepared by Courtney Boyce.*